



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR JEFF WRIGHT

December 14, 2010

Minutes

Mayor Wright called the meeting to order at 7 PM in the Helen Nelson Room of the Newington Town Hall.

I PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II ROLL CALL

Councilors Present:

Councilor Casasanta

Councilor Cohen

Councilor Klett

Councilor McBride

Council Nasinnyk

Mayor Wright

Councilor Banach – absent

Councilor Lenares – absent

Councilor Nagel – absent

Mayor Wright announced that Mr. John Salomone, Town Manager is absent tonight due to illness.

Staff Present

Jaime Trevethan, Exec. Asst. to the Town Manager

Dr. Collins, Superintendent of Schools

Lou Jachimowicz, Board of Education Business Manager

Mary Richard, Council Clerk

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mady Kenney, 53 Crestview Drive – spoke in favor of the suggested renovations to the Town Hall for the High School Program. She had observed the West Hartford program and she believes that it's there to maximize the potential of each individual. She said she wasn't sure where the funding would be coming from, which hasn't been finalized yet and she would like to see it through, not with a partially completed project.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Sidewalk Easements – Market Square

WHEREAS, the Newington Town Council referred the proposed public sidewalk easements at 122 – 136 Market Square for the purpose of municipal parking lot improvements to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for an 8-24 report on November 9, 2010; and

WHEREAS, the Newington Town Plan and Zoning Commission's 8-24 Referral report to the Town Council, dated November 22, 2010, expressed unanimous approval to report to the Town Council favorable support for the easement;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Manager is authorized to enter into an agreement for the acceptance of public sidewalk easements from the owner of the property located at 122-136 Market Square.

MOTION BY: Councilor Casasanta

SECONDED BY: Councilor Cohen

VOTE: _6 – 0 Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel, absent

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B. 2011 Schedule of Town Council Meeting Dates

Mayor Wright noted that the week of February 22, 2011 is a school vacation week. Councilor Nasinnyk said that school vacation was a different week and was not an issue last year and suggested that it stay in the schedule as is. Councilor Cohen said that she believes in the past it was a matter of special budget meetings not conflicting with school vacations. She said it should stay in the schedule, and to try not to schedule other issues on the agenda that would interfere. Mayor Wright stated that the meeting can be cancelled or changed in the future as needed.

RESOLVED:

The Newington Town Council, in compliance with the Freedom of Information act, hereby approves the 2011 Town Council regular meeting schedule as indicated on the attached document.

MOTION BY: Councilor Casasanta

SECONDED BY: Councilor Nasinnyk

VOTE: 6 – 0 Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel absent

V. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

A. Newington Volunteer Ambulance Presentation: HEARTSafe Community

Mr. Gary St.Amand of the State of CT Department of Public Health Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program spoke. He had intended to begin with a Public Service announcement but experienced some technical difficulties so continued with Mr. James Jennings, the Newington Volunteer Ambulance Chief. Mr. Jennings said that the HEARTsafe Program is where people from the public are encouraged to come in and learn the CPR process. So far over 50 people come in for the process and have received the approval from the State. In the near future he said they will be working with the Boy Scouts who have played a big part getting to this juncture and we will be helping the Boy Scouts with the projects and they will be helping us with our getting this point across on how important knowing CPR is. Mr. Robert Perrell, troop leader, said that Boy Scout Troup 347 has taken a great interest in this nine-town competition held every December and Troup 347 has won it for the last four years. He said that he always asks this question, 'physically speaking, who is the first person at the scene of an accident'? The answer is of course the victim. Although there are lots of things the victim can take care of, but they cannot take care of most heart issues which requires a team of people. He said that in the last year, Boy Scouts saved two individuals from a Boy Scout trained CPR. He said that Newington has a tremendous program that should help assure that we keep our residents safe in the future. Mr. St.Amand said that his son Phil was a member of Troup 347 years ago. Mr. St.Amand submitted a statement which is included in this packet. He also submitted a Public Service announcement of individuals who were helped by having this process available to them.

Councilor Casasanta asked if there could be some information put out to the public as to how people can register for this program. She also asked if there are any changes in the CPR or the AED. Mr. Jennings said that the AED will stay the same, the CPR has changed in that there will be new regulations coming in with that and the public can contact the Newington Volunteer Ambulance where there are classes with 8 to 10 CPR instructors. Councilor Nasinnyk said that this program is definitely a benefit to the Town and asked for an explanation of the AED. Mr. Jennings explained that an AED is an Automated External Defibrillator, there is one in the Town Hall, there is one in the Library, a couple in the schools and one in the Senior Center. He explained how the rhythm of the heart beat can determine how the shock can be delivered. Councilor Nasinnyk asked about the certification being something that has to be kept up with regular updating of the process. She said that it's a great thing available to the Town. Mayor Wright suggested to Mr. St. Amand that the information on the CPR and AED be posted on the website so the public can be kept aware of it.

With the technical difficulties resolved, Mr. St. Amand played a brief video for the Council, outlining the HEARTSafe program.

B. STEAP Grant Approval: Phase IV, Market Square

Mayor Wright said that Newington will receive an additional \$200,000 (STEAP) for fiscal year 2010 – 11 and Mr. Salomone expects the contract from the State Department of economic Development in the very near future. Councilor McBride said that the progress is moving along swiftly, and the Committee recently voted to keep Market Square a two-way road which is paramount to deciding the remaining steps.

Mayor Wright asked if there are any objections to waiving the rules. Councilor Cohen moved to waive the rules. Councilor Klett seconded. Vote 6 - 0 Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel absent.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with the State Department of Economic Development (DECD) to receive grant funding in the amount of \$200,000 from the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant to be utilized for construction of the Market Square Streetscape Improvement Project.

MOTION BY: Councilor Casasanta

SECONDED BY: Councilor Cohen

VOTE: 6 – 0 Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel absent

C. Town Hall/Board of Education Space Usage Proposal

Dr. Collins, Superintendent of Schools, discussed the Transitional Academy, a program for special education students 18-21 years old. He presented slides showing the children involved in the transition between school and work and said the object is to assist in development into adult life. The slides showed various jobs being learned in many simple tasks. He said that all the students are placed in work environments and try to use Newington as much as possible but they do have to go outside Newington and try to get the students on the job training. Each student has a different requirement and the program is based on each student's ability. He said that unfortunately when students are over the age of 18 it is no longer appropriate for them to be with high school students and with age appropriate peers, therefore the program must be moved from Newington High School. He said there are two options, one is to rent a store front somewhere downtown and the other option is here at the Town Hall and Mr. Salomone and he, discussed moving the program here into the Town Hall. That's what Dr. Collins would like to happen. He said that presently there are only three students, but there are 18 students in the pipeline right now. He said that it's important to know that these students are a valuable asset, fun kids, add a lot of value to our program, members of our community and society which is something ethically and morally that we need to provide a program here in Newington for our kids. He said that it's important to take the students out of the schools and into the working world. He said that a big part of the project is providing the students with actual job skills. He said that we have a great opportunity to use this grant money to buy equipment and a good portion of the renovation. He had discussed with Mr. Salomone moving the Engineering Department to the lower level.

Dr. Collins explained that moving the Transitional Academy to a downtown store front would involve costs such as rent, utilities etc. and being here in the Town Hall would save many dollars. He said that this absolutely beneficial to the kids. Mr. Lou Jachimowicz, Business Manager for the Board of Education, said that one thing important is the scope of the work of the students, where the biggest challenge is giving the students internal work that will be valuable to us. He said that this is a win/win situation monetarily and a win/win experience for the kids.

Councilor Cohen asked about the space at the High School, and Mr. Jachimowicz said that there are two rooms being used and we would duplicate the set up here. She asked if that space will still be used for students under 18. Mr. Jachimowicz said that it will still accommodate the incoming students. Councilor McBride asked about the 18 kids in the pipeline, are these coming up into the 18 plus. Dr. Collins said that these 18 plus students will stay with us until 21. Councilor Nasinnyk asked that several companies taking these students, is this the out placement program and Mr. Jachimowicz said no this is our own internal program. Councilor Nasinnyk said that having worked in a facility that employees these students, these students are earning money. Dr. Collins said that it's a hope that the student will be capable of earning money and said it's astonishing how much work is being produced. Councilor Nasinnyk said it wouldn't be a fee the Town would be paying, and Dr. Collins said

no, no fees are required from the Town. Councilor Nasinnyk asked if the project is on a time line and Dr. Collins said yes, we are, it's the grant money that will expire. Councilor Nasinnyk supports this program.

Mayor Wright said that obviously there has been a lot of analysis done, and talked about using the Town Hall or rented space, and asked about projected costs for the renovations for the Town Hall. Mr. Jachimowicz said that it would probably run around \$200,000. He said that what is needed is a handicap lift and bathroom facilities, along with the kitchenette and other functions of the living area. He said that according to what Mr. Salomone said is that the temporary plan is to move the Engineering Department to the lower level. Mayor Wright asked about the cost of the lower level. Mr. Jachimowicz said it would be \$530,000. Mayor Wright said that this \$530,000 plus, which would be about \$830,000. The Mayor asked for a breakdown of the total costs and at this point it's a big cost and he would like to see if these figures would be more or less. Mr. Jachimowicz said that the probable cost for the lower level completion would run about \$400,000 which is the remainder of the Health Benefit money which was not reallocated.

Councilor Casasanta asked when was the grant money awarded. Dr. Collins said it was about a year and a half ago. Councilor Casasanta asked what had happened between then and now. Dr. Collins said that there are restrictions on how this money can be spent. Councilor Casasanta asked in the future projection there might be more students being brought in and will that be possible before it's ready. Dr. Collins said that it's beneficial for us to bring in more students, rather having one student and having three with one instructor. Councilor Klett said that there would be a considerable amount of money saved by using the Town Hall and that's what Newington is all about and having grown up with a sibling who had Downs Syndrome and didn't have these kinds of opportunities and was isolated she can understand how any parent would feel when the Town doesn't want to do it because the cost would be too much, she said she won't do that to a parent or to a student. She supports this program and Dr. Collins and the others should be complimented on moving forward with this program. Dr. Collins said that one way or the other it has to get done and he said that Mr. Salomone has in mind to make it happen here in the Town Hall. Mr. Jachimowicz said that there is a time line needed for Council approval, not by today but probably in the next four weeks. Councilor Cohen said that she believes the location here is ideal because we are in compliance of the Town this will take care of it. She asked if Engineering is the only consideration of moving, or if something else could be considered. Dr. Collins said that Mr. Salomone suggested moving Engineering because it would provide great space for the Center. Councilor Cohen said that she would like to get more input from the Councilors who are not present tonight and also from the public, and she believes this would be a great program to move ahead. Mayor Wright asked if we decide not to do it here, that surplus \$150,000 from Health Insurance fund should be returned to the Health Insurance fund. No vote was taken.

D. Consideration of Cancelling the December 28, 2010 Council Meeting

Mayor Wright said that he will be out of town for that date and is in favor of cancelling that meeting. Councilor Nasinnyk said that she is not in favor usually of cancelling meetings but if there is a necessity it would be acceptable. Councilor Casasanta agreed with Councilor Nasinnyk and this would be the meeting needing to be cancelled. Councilor Klett said she had no problem with cancelling this meeting and it would allow parents to spend more time with their children and families. Councilor McBride said he has no problem with cancelling this meeting. Councilor Cohen said she has no problem with cancelling the meeting and hopes that the press would cover it adequately, so the public is aware and would have the opportunity to come forward with their comments outside of the meeting. Councilor Casasanta said this is a good time for the public to hear from the Board of Education and the Town Council on this program.

Councilor Nasinnyk moved to waive the rules to cancel the December 28, 2010 meeting. Councilor McBride seconded. Vote passes 6 – 0 Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel absent.

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby alters its meeting schedule by canceling its regular meeting scheduled for December 28, 2010

MOTION BY: Councilor Casasanta

SECONDED BY: Councilor Klett

VOTE: Passed 5 yes – 1 no (Councilor Nasinnyk voted no) Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel absent

VI. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby makes the following appointments:

17. Board of Education Roof Replacement Project Building Committee

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
NTC: Michael Lenares	76 Stonehedge Drive	R	NTC Term	N/A
BOE: Dan Carson	223 Little Brook Drive	R	BOE Term	N/A
BOE: Clarke Castelle	167 Connecticut Avenue	D	BOE Term	N/A

MOTION BY: Councilor Casasanta

SECONDED BY: Councilor Klett

VOTE: 6 -0 Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel absent

VII TAX REFUNDS

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$721.75 are hereby approved in the individual amounts and for those named on the "Requests for Refund of an Overpayment of Taxes," certified by the Revenue Collector, a list of which is attached to this resolution.

MOTION BY: Councilor Nasinnyk

SECONDED BY: Councilor Klett

VOTE: 6 – 0 Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel absent

VIII MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A. Regular Meeting, November 23, 2010

Councilor Cohen moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Councilor Nasinnyk seconded.

Vote 6- 0 Councilors Banach, Lenares, Nagel absent

IX WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC – No reports

X COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Nasinnyk said that she had attended the Library Board meeting last night and on January 21, 2011 from 7 PM to 9 PM there will be a wine and cheese party at the Library for the 50th Anniversary event, tickets are \$10.00 and can be purchased at the Library. Also the new cleaning crew is working out very well. Also on May 15, 2011 is scheduled for the 15th Annual Road Race.

Councilor Klett said that the Turf Committee met last night and will be meeting on Thursday night at 5 PM. Anyone interested is welcome to attend, and the meeting will also be recorded if anyone wishes to listen to the tapes.

Councilor McBride said that the Downtown Revitalization Committee will be meeting on Monday, December 20 at 5:30 PM in the TPZ room and will be discussing the design.

Councilor Cohen said that the Youth & Adult Council will go forward with the basketball Hoopla and also need help with the food bank and fortunately we had a very successful event over the last week. Also, she said the Commission on Aging is being overwhelmed and are in need of volunteers for the Meals on Wheels program and other services.

XI PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Mayor announced the phone number for the public who wish to participate. 860-665-8736

Ms. Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive said that she was glad that it was agreed that a 2/3rd vote to waive the rules, and that the public was not asked for participation, however she would vote to cancel the meeting on Dec. 28, 2010. Also she said regarding the Transitional Academy she agrees that it is something that the Town needs. She said that the CIP budget has allocated \$380,000 that has not been voted on which still leaves a \$50,000 shortage. She said in the past at the last minute some changes were made and she hopes that this will not be one of the changes that the Town Council makes and do what's right for the children in Town. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Ms. Sharon Braverman, 39 Churchill Way, Board of Education Liaison expressed her support for the Transitional Academy being placed in the Town Hall. She feels that this would be an excellent opportunity for the students to meet people and be a part of the community. This kind of training into real life experiences would be a wonderful thing and this is the right place to do it.

XII REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Klett said that there was an email sent out regarding Cedar Mountain because of the activity going on up there, and it appears that the private owner has said that they are doing what they are entitled to do

Councilor Cohen wished everyone happy holidays. Councilor Nasinnyk said that she was fortunate to be able to help with the "Stuff a Cruiser" function and said that there was a whole room stage right was stuffed and thanked the Police Department for taking part in that and all the volunteers for their help. She also mentioned that Councilor McBride had just become a father and congratulated him. Councilor Casasanta wished everyone happy holidays and keep healthy and safe.

Mayor Wright said that the CIP project this year, the pay as you go programs, once the money is spent, would be a capitol investment. This is a one time investment and does not affect future budgets. Also he mentioned Councilor Klett's comments on the Cedar Mountain issue and being private property have asked that no one trespasses there and have contacted the Police Department to take note.

He also hoped that Councilor McBride is able to get some sleep and congratulated him. He said that the "Stuff a Cruiser" was a huge success and also picked up another \$4000.in gift cards and cash donations. He also thanked The Hartford Saengerbund, this Thursday and they will be making a presentation to our Town with a \$1000. donation to the food bank. He closed with wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and looks forward to seeing everyone next year.

XIII EXECUTIVE SESSION RE: PERSONNEL - tabled

XIV ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Nasinnyk moved to adjourn at 8:40 PM. Seconded Councilor Klett. Vote 6 - 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Richard
Clerk of the Council